

The Low-Country SOLDIER turned BURGOMASTER.



PART I.

HERE you may see the turns of fate,
From woe to joy, from poor to great;
A mark of fortune's special love,
Who did a soldier's grief remove.

One who in former days, 'tis told,
Had trudg'd thro' weather hot and cold,
'Till he was poor and penniless,
You would have laugh'd to have seen the dress.

His shoes with trudging up and down,
No sole they had; a hat no crown;
His coat no sleeves, his shirt the same,
But by his side a sword of fame.

Without a scabbard good or bad,
Nor was there any to be had;
His coat and breeches would not come,
In depth to cover half his bum.

Now being weary of his trade,
One day he to his captain said,
Pray now give me a full discharge,
That I my fortune may enlarge.

I am persuaded I shall be
A burgomaster, sir, said he.
To Venice, if you'll let me go.
His captain smiling answer'd, No.

With you, said he, I will not part.
Then, thought the soldier, I'll desert.
My colours, let what will befall:
And soon he went for good and all.

Now as he march'd with all his might,
A coachman and his worthy knight,
Upon the road he chanc'd to find.
And ask'd to borrow full five pound.

At this the knight laugh'd out amain,
And said, When will you pay it again?
He answer'd, Sir, you shall be paid
When I am burgomaster made.

Of Venice, which will be my lot,
The noble knight away he got.

And laugh'd to see him in that trim,
But still the coachman lent it him.

This being done, away he went
To Venice, where some time he spent,
To view the palace rich and gay,
And then to Burgo's took his way.

Who kept a house to entertain
All kind of guest. He call'd amain
For wine and other liquors free,
Tho' in a wretched garb was he.

PART II.

THIS soldier was a gallant blade,
And while in pleasure there he stay'd;
Behold a squire living near,
Court'd the burgo's daughter dear.

Now as he kept her company,
One day the soldier sitting by,
Feigning asleep, he overheard
This private talk as it appeared.

Part of the private talk was this,
My dear sweet love the charming bliss,
Let me enjoy this self-same night.
The damsel told him that he might.

If he would to her chamber creep,
When all the house was fast asleep,
About the hour of twelve o'clock
She would the door for him unlock.

The soldier heard the whole design,
Thought he, The pleasure shall be mine,
And thereupon he went before
To the young lady's chamber-door.

He knock'd, and soon she let him in.
A pleasant game did then begin;
And ere an hour's time was past
Her love the squire came at last.

He knock'd, Who's there, the lady cry'd
The soldier lying by her side
Said, It is the ragged fellow sure,
Who seem'd as if he slept secure.

He heard us, and is come to have
That pleasure which our love did crave;
But it's in vain, I will arise
And dash the piss-pot in his eyes.

Accordingly, in woeful case,
He dash'd it in the squire's face;
Away he goes, and nothing said,
Supposing it had been the maid.

She laugh'd at the pleasant jest,
And gave him then among the rest
A diamond ring with kisses sweet,
But did not understand the cheat.

Then he arose and went his way.
Behold on the succeeding day,
Upon his right-hand the ring she espied.
Pray where had you the same, she cry'd?

He answer'd then, and thus he said,
Pray be not in the least dismay;
For you was loving, kind and free,
Last night, and gave the same to me.

O bless me! did I lie with you?
Since it is so, I pray be true;
And do not let the same be told,
So thou shalt never want for gold.

He vow'd he would conceal the same,
Soon after this the squire came,
Saying, Why was you so unkind?
The piss-pot made me almost blind.

The youthful damsel answer'd thus,
'Tis good enough if it were worse:
Because you thought to ruin me,
My honour and my chastity.

PART III.

IN part the third we must return,
Unto a mighty great concern;
Consisting of some thousand pounds,
Which the poor soldier's fortune crown'd.

Behold her wealthy father he,
Did send four mighty ships to sea,

Laden with glorious merchandize,
Rich silks and other wares likewise.

They had been gone full seven year,
No tale or tidings they could hear
Of them; at length he gave them o'er,
And never thought to see them more.

At length there was a letter brought,
The ships were safe with riches fraught,
Near to the borders of the land,
Which news came to his daughter's hand.

Then having view'd and read the same,
She to the ragged soldier came;
Crying, My dear, be true to me,
You shall a Burgomaster be.

My father thinks his ships are lost,
Which now are on the Venice coast;
And ere he does the tidings hear,
Go buy his right in them, my dear.

And when thou hast the bargain bought,
Of four large ships richly fraught;
Be what it will, of me you shall
Have money to pay for it all.

Then on her father he did wait,
And struck a bargain with him strait;
For the four ships four hundred pounds,
Whether the same be lost or found.

No sooner was the bargain made,
And that small sum of money paid;
But he heard the ships were come.
Their burden was a mighty sum.

Then did the Burgomaster fret,
Cause he with such a loss had met;
But since it could not better be,
He with the soldier did agree.

To take the daughter for a bride,
With all my heart, he then reply'd;
Then out of hand they married were,
The soldier and the lady fair.

No sooner were they man and wife,
But strait her father left this life,
And when he in his grave was laid,
The son was Burgomaster made.

He that had travell'd many miles
Was now by fortune's special smiles
Made mighty, powerful and great,
And knew no end of his estate.

PART IV.

NOW mind the latter part I pray,
I make no question but you'll say,
Still as you read the story out,
The things were strangely brought about.

While he was Burgomaster we hear,
His former captain did repair
Unto his house by chance to dine,
With other brave commanders fine.

The Burgomaster seeing that,
He strait put on his no crown'd hat;
With all his ragged cloaks,
And so into the room he goes.

The captain then began to swear,
Lieutenant, pray see who is there

My ragged Burgomaster, who
In private from his colours flew.

Strait from the presence of his good
He step'd away, himself he dress'd
In sumptuous robes he dress'd amain,
And then return'd to them again.

The captain said, Right worthy sir
Here is a foolish ragged cur:
Endu'd with neither wit nor sense,
I'll hang him e'er I go from hence.

He from his colours did desert.
The Burgo said, Be not so tart.
In presence of these gentlemen,
Write his discharge, here's guineas ten.

He wrote the same, and took the gold.
The Burgomaster said, Behold,
I am the man, and now at last
What once I said is come to pass.

The captain then began to fume,
And told his gallants in the room,
If he had known as much before,
It should have cost him ten times more.

And then within a month or less,
The knight whom once he did address,
To lend him five pounds on the road,
Come there to take up his abode.

The Burgomaster as before,
Put on his robes both rent and tore;
So that the knight might know him strait,
As he did on his worship wait.

He to his coachman turn'd him round,
And said, There's one owes you five pounds?
When do you think the same to get,
He is not Burgomaster yet.

The coachman said, as I do live,
I freely do the same forgive;
Because I to my sorrow see,
He still remains in poverty.

For some short time he went away
And dress'd himself in rich array;
In feathers fine, and rich perfume,
And so return'd into the room.

Having discours'd with them awhile,
He told the coachman with a smile,
As he help'd him in time of need,
He would return it now indeed.

He gave him then five thousand pound,
Likewise a match for him he found,
A sweet young lady fair and clear,
Daughter to a renowned peer.

The knight was vex'd to the heart,
That he must with his servant part;
But let him grieve, it must be so,
Whether his lordship will or no.

Thus he who once was mean and poor,
At length enjoys a happy store;
Which fortune unto him did send,
And he prov'd grateful to his friend.

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